

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**August 1, 2017**

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA

2017 SEP 20 PM 2:17

Present: Elisabeth Allison, Chair; Barbara Fiacco, Vice Chair; Raffi Manjikian

Absent: Charles Clark; Karl Haglund

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner

**1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM**

**2. Continued Public Hearings:**

- a. **55 Day School Lane – (Belmont Day School) – Design and Site Plan Review for gymnasium building ('the Barn') and site improvements.**

Ms. Allison recused herself.

Mr. Wheeler noted that the Applicant submitted a letter requesting continuance.

**MOTION to continue the public hearing to the August 14, 2017 Planning Board meeting was made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

[Ms. Allison rejoined the meeting.]

- b. **95 Washington Street (Chenery Middle School) – Design and Site Plan Review to install solar array – SR – C District**

**MOTION to accept the withdrawal of the application was made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

- c. **75 Leonard Street – Design and Site Plan Review to Waiver Parking Requirements (54 Parking Spaces) for Restaurant**

**MOTION to continue to September 5, 2017 was made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

- d. **344 Pleasant Street – Design and Site Plan Review; Retail Building Greater than 2,500 square feet – Local Business III District**

Mr. Noone, representing the Applicant, answered questions from the PB. He asked for clarification regarding the allowed square footage for the proposed sign and if it includes the support structure in the square footage. Ms. Fiacco noted that there was an example of a sign that was shown at Town Meeting that addressed the overall intent of the By-

Law. Mr. Noone withdrew the Special Permit application for the sign and asked the PB to provide some guidance.

Mr. Noone addressed the environmental concerns and noted that the prior owner is responsible for environmental issues. He stated that the LSP is responsible for monitoring the activities during construction and will dictate what the Applicant must do. He noted that the DEP, Mr. Leo and the LSP would be responsible for any future issues. Mr. Leo stated that there was an agreement with Getty that all of the old issues are a Getty responsibility and any new issues are the responsibility of the new owner. Mr. Manjikian and Ms. Allison asked to have a copy of the environmental document submitted. Mr. Wheeler noted that stormwater was a concern and that Ara Yogurtian did a preliminary review to make sure that the proposal met the standards of the Bylaw. The PB asked that Mr. Yogurtian look closely at the submission to confirm that it meets the Bylaw.

No one from the public commented on stormwater issues.

Mr. Noone addressed the traffic issues and noted that an analysis was submitted. He noted that the number of trips did not have any adverse impacts on the roadway. He explained that the analysis noted that there would not be any additional significant delays at the intersection and the traffic would not be more detrimental to the neighborhood. He added that the proposed parking spaces would more than satisfy the requirements for retail though this would be determined at the time of tenant occupancy.

Comments from the audience:

1. Michele Banker, Scott Road, questioned the flow of traffic contained in the traffic study.

Mr. Noone noted that the traffic analysis included a traffic count that would take into account those vehicles on Pleasant Street.

2. Russell Mann, Brighton Street, asked the PB to consider revising the traffic study with an appropriate usage and to consider the volume of traffic at the site and the level of congestion at the site. He asked that the study be carefully considered.
3. Joanne Hartunian, 391 Pleasant Street noted that her husband walks to work each day and he gets there faster than a visually marked car in traffic.

The PB discussed alternative ideas and potential ways to manage the traffic. Mr. Noone noted that until a use is determined the vehicular volume can only be assumed and the traffic engineers will put together more information for the PB.

**MOTION to continue the public hearing to September 5, 2017 was made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Ms. Fiacco. Motion passed.**

**Note: Items e. and f. below will be proceeded by a general discussion of criteria.**

Ms. Allison noted that the homes in each case were very large relative to other homes in the neighborhood. She provided the PB with a more systematic approach to consider when reviewing the applications. She distributed a worksheet for both applications to get a sense of how the additions will impact density, mass and size. She noted that she will put together a list of more qualitative factors for the PB to consider as well and that this information will be distributed to Applicants prior to the meeting.

- e. 175 Brighton Street – Special Permit for Addition Greater than 30% - SR – C District**

**MOTION to continue to September 5, 2017 was made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

- f. 75 Lorimer Road – Special Permit for Addition Greater than 30% - SR – C District**

**MOTION to continue to September 5, 2017 was made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

**3. Update regarding Waverly Square/South Pleasant Street mixed-use concept**

Mr. Wheeler distributed copies of the previous PowerPoint presentation to the audience. Ms. Allison gave an update and noted that the Board of Selectman stated that it was important that the PB discuss the idea with Board of Library Trustees. Ms. Allison noted that there have been numerous comments submitted and that they fall into the following categories:

1. Process Concerns
2. Substance Concerns
3. Misunderstandings
4. Global Reactions

Ms. Allison reviewed the categories and gave examples for each.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Kathy Keohane, Chair Library of Trustees, was concerned about lack of process and noted the importance of meeting with the Trustees. She added that there was a labeling issue, drawings were done, and that the key stake holders were not notified and did not provide any in-put.

2. Mark Paolillo, Board of Selectmen, noted that the Capital Projects Working Group was trying to figure out how to move forward with the four major building projects and was looking forward to the dialogue between the community, the Trustees and the PB.
3. Ezra Nelson, Town Meeting Member, noted that she was concerned about the traffic. She noted that the traffic was already very congested in Waverly Square.
4. Tomi Olson, Town Meeting Member, asked the PB to explain the financing and ownership structures.

Mr. Manjikian explained that it was an idea and that the details of the numbers have not been determined. Ms. Allison noted that the cost to the Town had to be 25% or less of the cost of bonding the library for 20 years at 5%.

5. Jessica Bennet, Precinct 1, noted that she would like to see evidence that this idea could be successful. She asked that the Town carefully approach private-public partnerships.
6. Mary Lewis, Precinct 1, noted that she was concerned about the lease rates and it would be insane not to purchase the property as the interest rates are currently low. She was concerned about the lack of transparency. She also noted that it was essential that it be a walkable space. Lastly, she noted that the Town should be trying to incentivize revenue generating businesses in Waverly Square and keep the library in a central location where it was walkable to most of the schools in Town.
7. David Steveder, Precinct 1, noted that the Library Board of Trustees should have control of where the library should be located.
8. Robert McIntyre, Precinct 8, asked the PB to clarify impacts on property taxes. He wanted to know if a developer was involved. He questioned whether or not the Underwood property should be given back to its previous owner if the library is moved.

Ms. Allison noted that the Warrant Committee would need to review the numbers before this information could be provided. Mr. Manjikian stated that a developer was not involved in the development of this idea. No one could answer the question regarding future ownership.

9. Melissa McIntyre, Town Meeting Member, asked about the affordable housing and to review any positive comments received from the community. She also questioned how people knew that their cases were continued from earlier in the evening.

Mr. Manjikian stated that it was too early to know the details regarding the affordable housing. He noted that he received three or four positive comments from his colleagues

and friends. Mr. Wheeler stated that he reached out to the Applicants to tell them that their cases were not being discussed tonight.

10. Joanne Hartunian, 391 Pleasant Street, noted that she was concerned about transparency. She added that it was important for the library to be located close to the middle and high schools.

11. Priya Licht, Town Meeting asked the PB to explain the thinking behind this idea.

Mr. Manjikian noted that it was first discussed at the Major Capital Planning Work Group. He added that the PB held a meeting to discuss revitalizing Waverley Square.

12. Anne Mahon, Precinct 4, noted the importance of the library's proximity to the high School. She commented on various opportunities that the students have to use the library.

13. Oui Qui, Precinct 7, asked about the process and who would make the final decision.

The PB noted that Town Meeting would make the final decision.

14. Michelle Banker, Town Meeting Member, supported senior housing and noted opportunities for buildings along Trapelo Road. She added that this would be a fascinating way to provide business and offices for the Town.

15. Rachel Heller, Member of Housing Trust, noted that it was important to look at the whole Square. She added that the Housing Production Plan was just completed and there were tools available to help develop the house.

16. Steve Pinkerton, Town Meeting Member, asked for an explanation regarding the "go or no go" decision in September.

Ms. Allison stated that the "go or no go" means to understand the economics and to get some sense if this could be real or not.

17. Renee Guo, resident, noted that she was greatly concerned about parking on the site and how the natural resources at the library site would be impact by the police station. She asked the PB to consider the revitalization of Waverly Square and to think of a long-term comprehensive vision. She noted that the proposed library could be a lost revenue generating opportunity for the Town.

18. Mark Paolillo, Board of Selectmen, stated that he was on the Major Capital Projects Working Group and that their goal was to have public meetings to get input and to have a

presentation in the fall. He added that the Town had four major building projects and that perhaps this was an idea that could work. He asked that everyone keep up the dialogue.

19. Judith Reilly, Town Meeting Member, noted that she was very much in favor of the idea and liked the idea of connecting seniors to the library. She stated that she believes that this idea was a great way to revive Waverly Square and that anyway to reduce property taxes needs to be considered.

20. Ms. Kathy Keohane, Chair, Library Trustees, noted that this was about dialogue and open communication and an exchange of ideas. She noted that the proposal with pictures was off putting and the community supported a feasibility study and that the PB needs to respect that input and to look at that area as a whole not just that one building.

Ms. Allison noted that all of the comments would be taken under consideration. She added that all four major projects are important and that it would be difficult to pass four debt exclusions and an operating override.

#### **4. Adjournment 9:35 PM**